



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Corinne Harlos,  
Correction Officer Recruit (S9988T),  
Department of Corrections

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

CSC Docket No. 2018-1734

List Removal Appeal

**ISSUED: APRIL 6, 2018**

**(JET)**

Corinne Harlos appeals the removal of her name from the Correction Officer Recruit (S9988T), Department of Corrections, eligible list on the basis of an unsatisfactory employment record and falsification of the employment application.

The appellant took the open competitive examination for Correction Officer Recruit (S9988T), achieved a passing score, and was ranked on the subsequent eligible list. The appellant’s name was certified to the appointing authority on July 23, 2015. In disposing of the certification, the appointing authority requested the removal of the appellant’s name from the eligible list on the basis of an unsatisfactory employment record and falsification of the employment application. Specifically, the appointing authority asserted that, while employed as a Dispatcher with the Pompton Lakes Police Department, the appellant was reprimanded for lying to a supervisor, failing to conduct warrants checks, and for failing to provide pre-arrival instructions for a 911 emergency call. The appointing authority also asserted that the appellant failed to disclose the aforementioned reprimands on her employment application and at the time of her home interview. It is noted that the appointing authority’s Employment Contact form completed by the Pompton Lakes Police Department dated July 4, 2016 indicates that disciplinary charges including a performance notice, oral warning, and remedial training were issued against the appellant. Additionally, the appointing authority submitted copies of disciplinary notices from the Borough of Pompton Lakes, including a Departmental Complaint Notification dated July 10, 2015, indicating that a complaint was filed against the appellant for failing to provide pre-arrival instructions on an emergency 911 call and subsequently lying to a supervisor; a Departmental Complaint Notification

dated July 10, 2015, indicating that the appellant advised an officer that there were no outstanding warrants against an individual and it was later discovered that there were outstanding warrants; an Internal Affairs Final Disposition Report dated July 21, 2015, indicating that an oral warning was issued and training was required; an Internal Affairs Final Disposition Report dated July 21, 2015, indicating that a performance notice would be issued and training was required; an Employee Disciplinary Notice dated July 21, 2015 indicating that the appellant was not proficient in her abilities to properly check an individual for warrants as instructed by her shift commander; an Employee Disciplinary Notice dated July 21, 2015 indicating that the appellant failed to provide pre-arrival instructions on a choking 911 emergency call; and an Employee Disciplinary Notice dated July 21, 2015 indicating that the disciplinary performance notice would not be placed in her personnel file.

On appeal, the appellant asserts that she currently works at the Pompton Lakes Police Department and the Chief of Police informed her that no formal disciplinary action was issued against her for failing to complete warrants checks, failing to provide pre-arrival instructions, or for allegedly lying to a supervisor. Rather, the Chief of Police stated that her personnel file indicates that she was only issued oral warnings and performance notices. In addition, the appellant explains that such infractions were due to a misunderstanding that occurred at the time an administrative investigation and an internal investigation were conducted, and as such, such information was omitted from her application. The appellant adds that the Chief of Police understands why she omitted the information from the employment application. Moreover, the appellant maintains that she is still interested in employment as a Correction Officer Recruit.

In response, the appointing authority asserts that the appellant submitted an employment verification form to the Pompton Lakes Police Department as a part of the pre-employment process, and in response, it returned the verification form indicating that disciplinary charges were issued against the appellant. In this regard, the employment verification form indicated that the appellant was disciplined for failing to provide pre-arrival instructions pertaining to a 911 emergency call and for failing to run warrants checks. The appointing authority adds that the appellant also did not list such infractions on her employment application. In addition, the appointing authority explains that the employment application lists the criteria that may lead to the removal of a candidate's name from the list, and the appellant was aware of such as she initialed each page of the employment application. The appointing authority explains that the appellant's failure to disclose such information in response to the questions on the employment application was sufficient to remove her name from the list, as such information must be disclosed so it may properly conduct a background investigation. Moreover, the appointing authority asserts that its goals are to select candidates who exhibit

respect for the law in order to effectively manage the day-to-day operations of a prison system.

## CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-4.7(a)1, in conjunction with *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.1(a)6, allows the Civil Service Commission (Commission) to remove an individual from an eligible list when he or she has made a false statement of any material fact or attempted any deception or fraud in any part of the selection or appointment process. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-4.7(a)1, in conjunction with *N.J.A.C.* 4A:4-6.1(a)9, allows for the removal an eligible's name from an eligible list for other sufficient reasons. Removal for other sufficient reasons includes, but is not limited to, a consideration that based on a candidate's background and recognizing the nature of the position at issue, a person should not be eligible for an appointment.

In the instant matter, the appointing authority argues that the appellant did not disclose that she was reprimanded for various infractions while serving as a Dispatcher with the Pompton Lakes Police Department. The appellant argues that she did not disclose such information as her Police Chief informed her that her personnel file does not contain any incidents of major disciplinary actions, and she explains that there was some confusion with respect to the internal investigations that were conducted pertaining to the incidents. These contentions are unpersuasive. It is clear that the appellant did not properly complete the employment application. It must be emphasized that it is incumbent upon an applicant, particularly an applicant for a sensitive position such as a Correction Officer Recruit, to ensure that her employment application is a complete and accurate depiction of her history. In this regard, the Appellate Division of the New Jersey Superior Court in *In the Matter of Nicholas D'Alessio*, Docket No. A-3901-01T3 (App. Div. September 2, 2003), affirmed the removal of a candidate's name based on falsification of his employment application and noted that the primary inquiry in such a case is whether the candidate withheld information that was material to the position sought, not whether there was any intent to deceive on the part of the applicant. An applicant must be held accountable for the accuracy of the information submitted on an application for employment and risks omitting or forgetting any information at his or her peril. See *In the Matter of Curtis D. Brown* (MSB, decided September 5, 1991) (An honest mistake is not an allowable excuse for omitting relevant information from an application).

In this case, the appellant's omissions are sufficient cause to remove her name from the eligible list. It is clear that she failed to disclose information in her background in response to the questions in the employment application. In this regard, in response to question 37 on the employment application, "Were you ever suspended or given a written reprimand by an employer," the appellant checked "no" and did not provide any other information pertaining to the reprimands

pertaining to the aforementioned infractions issued against her. The type of omissions presented are clearly significant and cannot be condoned as such information is crucial in an appointing authority's assessment of a candidate's suitability for the position. The information noted above, which the appellant failed to disclose, is considered material and should have been accurately indicated on her employment application. The appellant's failure to disclose the information is indicative of her questionable judgment. Such qualities are unacceptable for an individual seeking a position as a Correction Officer Recruit. In this regard, the Commission notes that a Correction Officer Recruit is a law enforcement employee who must help keep order in the State prisons and promote adherence to the law. Correction Officers hold highly visible and sensitive positions within the community and the standard for an applicant includes good character and an image of utmost confidence and trust. *See Moorestown v. Armstrong*, 89 N.J. Super. 560 (App. Div. 1965), *cert. denied*, 47 N.J. 80 (1966). *See also In re Phillips*, 117 N.J. 567 (1990). The public expects prison guards to present a personal background that exhibits respect for the law and rules.

Additionally, the record reflects that the appellant was reprimanded while serving as a Dispatcher with the Pompton Lakes Police Department for such incidents as lying to a supervisor, failing to conduct warrants checks, and for failing to provide pre-arrival instructions for a 911 emergency call. Such infractions occurred in 2015, which is less than one year since the time her name was certified on the subject list. Given the proximity in time to when the infractions occurred and date her name appeared on the list, such infractions adversely relate to the employment sought. Correction Officers are responsible for overseeing a population of prison inmates in a para-military organization and the appellant's infractions are inimical to that goal. However, given the further passage of time and evidence of a satisfactory employment record, such infractions along with a properly and fully completed employment application will not be a sufficient basis for an appointing authority to remove her name from future lists.

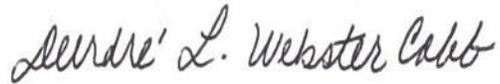
Accordingly, the appointing authority has submitted sufficient evidence to support the removal of the appellant's name from the eligible list for Correction Officer Recruit (S9988T), Department of Corrections.

### **ORDER**

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON  
THE 4<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2018



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